

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

CLAIMS 1-47 (CANCELED).

CLAIM 48 (CURRENTLY AMENDED): A snowboard binding mechanism for securing a cleat adapted to be attached to a snowboard boot to a snowboard, comprising:

a front main body adapted to be affixed to the snowboard, said front main body including a cleat receiving opening for receiving a front tab of a cleat;

a rear main body adapted to be affixed to the snowboard;

a latch pivotally mounted to said rear main body to pivot between an engaged position and a release position, said latch including a notch for receiving a rear tab of a cleat;

wherein said notch is dimensioned and positioned to be located beneath a sole of the boot when the boot is fastened to the binding mechanism;

a spring mounted on said rear main body, said spring arranged to bias said latch toward said engaged position when said latch is at said release and engaged positions; and

 said latch being pivotable to said release position allowing release of the rear tab held therein against the bias of said spring without movement of said rear main body when said rear main body is affixed to the snowboard.

CLAIM 49 (ORIGINAL): A snowboard binding mechanism as in claim 48, further comprising a latch securing means for preventing said latch from pivoting to said release position.

CLAIM 50 (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED): A snowboard binding mechanism for securing a cleat adapted to be attached to a snowboard boot to a snowboard, comprising:

a front main body adapted to be affixed to the snowboard, said front main body including a cleat receiving opening for receiving a front tab of a cleat;

a rear main body adapted to be affixed to the snowboard;

a latch pivotally mounted to said rear main body to pivot between an engaged position and a release position, said latch including a notch for receiving a rear tab of a cleat;

 a spring mounted on said rear main body, said spring arranged to bias said latch toward said engaged position;

said latch being pivotable to said release position allowing release of the rear tab held therein against the bias of said spring without movement of said rear main body when said rear main body is affixed to the snowboard;

a latch securing means for preventing said latch from pivoting to said release position; and wherein said latch securing means includes a sliding shaft mounted on said rear main body, said sliding shaft including a head, wherein said sliding shaft is movable between: (a) a secure position wherein said head contacts said latch preventing the latch from pivoting to its release position, and (b) a free position, wherein said head is clear of the range of motion of said latch, allowing said latch to be pivoted to its release position.

CLAIM 51 (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED): A snowboard binding mechanism for securing a cleat adapted to be attached to a snowboard boot to a snowboard, comprising:

a front main body adapted to be affixed to the snowboard, said front main body including a cleat receiving opening for receiving a front tab of a cleat;

a rear main body adapted to be affixed to the snowboard;

a latch pivotally mounted to said rear main body to pivot between an engaged position and a release position, said latch including a notch for receiving a rear tab of a cleat;

a spring mounted on said rear main body, said spring arranged to bias said latch toward said engaged position;

said latch being pivotable to said release position allowing release of the rear tab held therein against the bias of said spring;

a latch securing means for preventing said latch from pivoting to said release position, wherein said latch securing means comprises:

a sliding shaft mounted on said rear main body, said sliding shaft including a head, wherein said sliding shaft is movable between: (a) a secure position wherein said head contacts said latch preventing the latch from pivoting to its release position, and (b) a free position, wherein said head is clear of the range of motion of said latch, allowing said latch to be pivoted to its release position; and

a hook mounted on said sliding shaft, said hook including a groove, and a tab mounted on said rear main body, wherein when said sliding shaft is in said secure position said groove is engaged with said tab.

CLAIM 52 (ORIGINAL): A snowboard binding mechanism as in claim 51, wherein said hook further includes a cord attaching means for securing a pull cord operable to disengage said groove from said tab.

CLAIM 53 (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED): A snowboard binding mechanism for securing a cleat adapted to be attached to a snowboard boot to a snowboard, comprising:

a front main body adapted to be affixed to the snowboard, said front main body including a cleat receiving opening for receiving a front tab of a cleat;

a rear main body adapted to be affixed to the snowboard;

a latch pivotally mounted to said rear main body to pivot between an engaged position and a release position, said latch including a notch for receiving a rear tab of a cleat;

a spring mounted on said rear main body, said spring arranged to bias said latch toward said engaged position;

said latch being pivotable to said release position allowing release of the rear tab held therein against the bias of said spring; and

wherein said cleat receiving notch has at least one notch bevel surface for engaging with a bevel surface on said cleat to cause a force to be applied to said notch bevel surface sufficient to overcome the biasing force of said spring, thereby pivoting said latch to said release position.

CLAIM 54 (ORIGINAL): A snowboard binding mechanism as in claim 53, wherein said notch includes first and second notch bevel surfaces on opposite sides of said notch for engaging with respective tab surfaces provided on opposite sides of a cleat tab for pivoting the latch to said release position.

CLAIM 55 (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED): A snowboard binding mechanism for securing a cleat adapted to be attached to a snowboard boot to a snowboard, comprising:

a front main body adapted to be affixed to the snowboard, said front main body including a cleat receiving opening for receiving a front tab of a cleat;

a rear main body adapted to be affixed to the snowboard;

a latch pivotally mounted to said rear main body to pivot between an engaged position and a release position, said latch including a notch for receiving a rear tab of a cleat;

a spring mounted on said rear main body, said spring arranged to bias said latch toward said engaged position;

said latch being pivotable to said release position allowing release of the rear tab held therein against the bias of said spring; and

a latch axle mounted on said rear main body, wherein said latch is pivotally mounted on said latch axle and said spring is mounted on said axle.

CLAIM 56 (ORIGINAL): A snowboard binding mechanism as in claim 55, wherein said spring includes a first arm engaged with said rear main body and a second arm engaged with said latch.

CLAIM 57 (ORIGINAL): A snowboard binding mechanism as in claim 55, wherein said latch further includes a latch body forming said notch, and first and second legs extending from said latch body, said first and second legs being mounted on said latch axle.

CLAIM 58 (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED): A snowboard binding mechanism for securing a cleat adapted to be attached to a snowboard boot to a snowboard, comprising:

a front main body adapted to be affixed to the snowboard, said front main body including a cleat receiving opening for receiving a front tab of a cleat;

a rear main body adapted to be affixed to the snowboard;

a latch pivotally mounted to said rear main body to pivot between an engaged position and a release position, said latch including a notch for receiving a rear tab of a cleat;

a spring mounted on said rear main body, said spring arranged to bias said latch toward said engaged position;

said latch being pivotable to said release position allowing release of the rear tab held therein against the bias of said spring without movement of said rear main body when said rear main body is affixed to the snowboard; and

wherein said front main body further includes a first wall and a second wall, said first and second walls tapering towards said cleat receiving opening to guide the front tab of the cleat into engagement as the front tab is moved towards said cleat receiving opening.

CLAIM 59 (ORIGINAL): A snowboard binding mechanism as in claim 58, wherein said front main body further comprises a retaining bar extending from said first wall to said second wall, wherein said cleat receiving opening is bounded by said first wall, said second wall and said retaining bar.

CLAIM 60 (ORIGINAL): A snowboard binding mechanism as in claim 48, further comprising a fixing plate for affixing said front and rear main bodies to the snowboard.

CLAIM 61 (ORIGINAL): A snowboard binding mechanism as in claim 60, wherein said fixing plate includes elongated holes through which said fixing plate is secured to the snowboard, thereby allowing adjustment of the position of the front and rear main bodies in a direction along a longitudinal axis of the snowboard.

CLAIM 62 (CURRENTLY AMENDED): ~~A snowboard binding mechanism comprising:~~
~~a cleat adapted to be attached to a snowboard boot, wherein the cleat includes a front tab and a rear tab;~~

~~a front main body adapted to be affixed to the snowboard, said front main body including a cleat receiving opening for receiving the front tab of the cleat;~~

~~a rear main body adapted to be affixed to the snowboard;~~

~~a latch pivotally mounted to said rear main body to pivot between an engaged position and a release position, said latch including a notch for receiving the rear tab of the cleat;~~

~~a spring mounted on said rear main body, said spring arranged to bias said latch toward said engaged position;~~

~~said latch being pivotable to said release position allowing release of the rear tab held therein against the bias of said spring without movement of said rear main body when said rear main body is affixed to the snowboard; and~~

A snowboard binding mechanism as in claim 48, further comprising the cleat, and wherein said front tab is engaged within said cleat receiving opening, said rear tab engaging said notch.

CLAIM 63 (CURRENTLY AMENDED): A snowboard binding mechanism for securing a cleat adapted to be attached to a snowboard boot to a snowboard, comprising:

a front main body adapted to be affixed to the snowboard, said front main body including a cleat receiving opening;

a rear main body adapted to be affixed to the snowboard;

a latch pivotally mounted to said rear main body to pivot between an engaged position and a release position, said latch including a cleat receiving notch;

wherein said cleat receiving notch is dimensioned and positioned to be located beneath a sole of the boot when the boot is fastened to the binding mechanism;

a cleat having a front tab and a rear tab, wherein said front tab is adapted to engage said cleat receiving opening in said front main body and said rear tab is adapted to engage said cleat receiving notch in said latch;

a spring mounted on said rear main body, wherein said spring is arranged to bias said latch toward said engaged position;

 said latch being pivotable to said release position allowing release of said rear tab held therein against the bias of said spring; and

 wherein said cleat further includes a rear portion and a front portion, said front portion being lower than said rear portion relative to said binding mechanism, wherein said front tab extends from said front portion and said rear tab extends from said rear portion.

CLAIM 64 (CURRENTLY AMENDED): A snowboard binding mechanism for securing a cleat adapted to be attached to a snowboard boot to a snowboard, comprising:

a front main body adapted to be affixed to the snowboard, said front main body including a cleat receiving opening;

a rear main body adapted to be affixed to the snowboard;

a latch pivotally mounted to said rear main body to pivot between an engaged position and a release position, said latch including a cleat receiving notch;

a cleat having a front tab and a rear tab, wherein said front tab is adapted to engage said cleat receiving opening in said front main body and said rear tab is adapted to engage said cleat receiving notch in said latch;

a spring mounted on said rear main body, wherein said spring is arranged to bias said latch toward said engaged position;

said latch being pivotable to said release position allowing release of said rear tab held therein against the bias of said spring;

wherein said cleat further includes a rear portion and a front portion, said front portion being lower than said rear portion relative to said binding mechanism, wherein said front tab extends from said front portion and said rear tab extends from said rear portion; and

~~A snowboard binding mechanism as in claim 63, further comprising a boot including an outsole, said outsole including a bottom surface and a recess formed therein, wherein said cleat is affixed to said boot within said recess such that said cleat is farther from the snowboard than said bottom surface.~~

CLAIM 65 (ORIGINAL): A snowboard binding mechanism as in claim 64, wherein said recess includes a front bevel on said outsole, said front bevel being arranged to engage said front main body as said boot is lowered onto said binding mechanism thereby guiding said front tab into engagement with said front main body.

CLAIM 66 (ORIGINAL): A snowboard binding mechanism as in claim 65, wherein said front bevel is arcuate.

CLAIM 67 (ORIGINAL): A snowboard binding mechanism as in claim 64, wherein said recess includes a rear bevel on said outsole, said rear bevel being arranged to engage said rear main body as said boot is lowered onto said binding mechanism thereby guiding said rear tab into engagement with said rear main body.

CLAIM 68 (ORIGINAL): A snowboard binding mechanism as in claim 67, wherein said rear bevel is arcuate.

CLAIM 69 (ORIGINAL): A snowboard binding mechanism as in claim 64, wherein said binding mechanism engages said cleat so as to maintain a longitudinal axis of said boot generally transverse to a longitudinal axis of the snowboard.

CLAIM 70 (CURRENTLY AMENDED): A snowboard binding mechanism for securing a cleat adapted to be attached to a snowboard boot to a snowboard, comprising:

a front main body adapted to be affixed to the snowboard, said front main body including a cleat receiving opening;

a rear main body adapted to be affixed to the snowboard;

a latch pivotally mounted to said rear main body to pivot between an engaged position and a release position, said latch including a cleat receiving notch;

wherein said cleat receiving notch is dimensioned and positioned to be located beneath a sole of the boot when the boot is fastened to the binding mechanism;

a cleat having a front tab and a rear tab, wherein said front tab is adapted to engage said cleat receiving opening in said front main body and said rear tab is adapted to engage said cleat receiving notch in said latch;

a spring mounted on said rear main body, wherein said spring is arranged to bias said latch toward said engaged position;

said latch being pivotable to said release position allowing release of said rear tab held therein against the bias of said spring; and

wherein said rear tab has a bevel surface on a bottom portion thereof, said bevel surface being engageable with said latch to force said latch to pivot to said release position as said cleat is lowered against said binding mechanism.

CLAIM 71 (CURRENTLY AMENDED): A snowboard binding mechanism for securing a cleat adapted to be attached to a snowboard boot to a snowboard, comprising:

a front main body adapted to be affixed to the snowboard, said front main body including a cleat receiving opening;

a rear main body adapted to be affixed to the snowboard;
a latch pivotally mounted to said rear main body to pivot between an engaged position and a release position, said latch including a cleat receiving notch;
wherein said cleat receiving notch is dimensioned and positioned to be located beneath a sole of the boot when the boot is fastened to the binding mechanism;
a cleat having a front tab and a rear tab, wherein said front tab is adapted to engage said cleat receiving opening in said front main body and said rear tab is adapted to engage said cleat receiving notch in said latch;
a spring mounted on said rear main body, wherein said spring is arranged to bias said latch toward said engaged position;
said latch being pivotable to said release position allowing release of said rear tab held therein against the bias of said spring; and
wherein said latch has a beveled surface on a top portion thereof engageable with said rear tab such that lowering said rear tab against said latch forces said latch to pivot to said release position.

CLAIM 72 (CURRENTLY AMENDED): A snowboard binding mechanism for securing a cleat adapted to be attached to a snowboard boot to a snowboard, comprising:

a front main body adapted to be affixed to the snowboard, said front main body including a cleat receiving opening;
a rear main body adapted to be affixed to the snowboard;
a latch pivotally mounted to said rear main body to pivot between an engaged position and a release position, said latch including a cleat receiving notch;
wherein said cleat receiving notch is dimensioned and positioned to be located beneath a sole of the boot when the boot is fastened to the binding mechanism;
a cleat having a front tab and a rear tab, wherein said front tab is adapted to engage said cleat receiving opening in said front main body and said rear tab is adapted to engage said cleat receiving notch in said latch;
a spring mounted on said rear main body, wherein said spring is arranged to bias said latch toward said engaged position;

said latch being pivotable to said release position allowing release of said rear tab held therein against the bias of said spring; and

wherein said latch has a latch bevel on a top portion thereof and said rear tab has a tab bevel on a bottom portion thereof, said latch bevel and tab bevel being engageable to pivot said latch to said release position as said cleat is lowered against said binding.

CLAIMS 73-144 (CANCELED).

CLAIM 145 (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED): A snowboard binding mechanism for securing a cleat adapted to be attached to a snowboard boot to a snowboard, comprising:

a front main body adapted to be affixed to the snowboard, said front main body including a cleat receiving opening for receiving a front tab of a cleat;

a rear main body adapted to be affixed to the snowboard, said rear main body having a rearward-facing surface;

a latch pivotally mounted to said rear main body to pivot between an engaged position and a release position, said latch being rigid and having a first leg with a front surface, said latch further including a notch for receiving a rear tab of a cleat, said notch forming a recess at least part of which is located rearwardly of said front surface of said first leg;

a spring mounted on said rear main body, said spring arranged to bias said latch toward said engaged position;

wherein said latch is prevented from pivoting beyond said engaged position by an abutment of said front surface of said first leg against said rearward-facing surface of said rear main body; and

wherein said latch is pivotable to said release position allowing release of the rear tab held therein against the bias of said spring.

CLAIM 146 (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED): A snowboard binding mechanism as in claim 145 wherein an entirety of said recess is located rearwardly of said front surface of said first leg.

CLAIM 147 (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED): A snowboard binding mechanism as in claim 145 wherein said latch further has a second leg with a front surface and said front surfaces of the

first and second legs abut against said rearward-facing surface of said rear main body to prevent said latch from pivoting beyond said engaged position.

CLAIM 148 (CURRENTLY AMENDED): A snowboard binding mechanism for securing a cleat adapted to be attached to a snowboard boot to a snowboard, comprising:

a front main body adapted to be affixed to the snowboard, said front main body including a cleat receiving opening for receiving a front tab of a cleat;

a rear main body adapted to be affixed to the snowboard;

a latch pivotally mounted to said rear main body to pivot between an engaged position and a release position, said latch including a notch for receiving a rear tab of a cleat;

wherein said notch is dimensioned and positioned to be located beneath a sole of the boot when the boot is fastened to the binding mechanism;

a spring mounted on said rear main body, said spring arranged to bias said latch toward said engaged position when said latch is at said release and engaged positions;

said latch being pivotable to said release position allowing release of the rear tab held therein against the bias of said spring; and

wherein said latch pivots around an axle, wherein said axle does not move forwardly or rearwardly with respect to the snowboard when said rear main body is mounted to the snowboard and said latch pivots from said engaged position to said release position.

CLAIM 149 (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED): A snowboard binding mechanism as in claim 148, further comprising a latch securing means for preventing said latch from pivoting to said release position.

CLAIM 150 (CURRENTLY AMENDED): A snowboard binding mechanism for securing a cleat adapted to be attached to a snowboard boot to a snowboard, comprising:

a front main body adapted to be affixed to the snowboard, said front main body including a cleat receiving opening for receiving a front tab of a cleat;

a rear main body adapted to be affixed to the snowboard;

a latch pivotally mounted to said rear main body to pivot between an engaged position and a release position, said latch including a notch for receiving a rear tab of a cleat;

a spring mounted on said rear main body, said spring arranged to bias said latch toward said engaged position when said latch is at said release and engaged positions;

said latch being pivotable to said release position allowing release of the rear tab held therein against the bias of said spring;

wherein said latch pivots around an axle, wherein said axle does not move forwardly or rearwardly with respect to the snowboard when said rear main body is mounted to the snowboard and said latch pivots from said engaged position to said release position;

a latch securing means for preventing said latch from pivoting to said release position; and

A snowboard binding mechanism as in claim 149, wherein said latch securing means includes a sliding shaft mounted on said rear main body, said sliding shaft including a head, wherein said sliding shaft is movable between: (a) a secure position wherein said head contacts said latch preventing the latch from pivoting to its release position, and (b) a free position, wherein said head is clear of the range of motion of said latch, allowing said latch to be pivoted to its release position.

CLAIM 151 (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED): A snowboard binding mechanism for securing a cleat adapted to be attached to a snowboard boot to a snowboard, comprising:

a front main body adapted to be affixed to the snowboard, said front main body including a cleat receiving opening for receiving a front tab of a cleat;

a rear main body adapted to be affixed to the snowboard;

a latch pivotally mounted to said rear main body to pivot between an engaged position and a release position, said latch including a notch for receiving a rear tab of a cleat;

a spring mounted on said rear main body, said spring arranged to bias said latch toward said engaged position;

said latch being pivotable to said release position allowing release of the rear tab held therein against the bias of said spring;

wherein said latch pivots around an axle, wherein said axle does not move forwardly or rearwardly when said latch pivots;

a latch securing means for preventing said latch from pivoting to said release position;

wherein said latch securing means includes a sliding shaft mounted on said rear main body, said sliding shaft including a head, wherein said sliding shaft is movable between: (a) a secure

position wherein said head contacts said latch preventing the latch from pivoting to its release position, and (b) a free position, wherein said head is clear of the range of motion of said latch, allowing said latch to be pivoted to its release position; and

wherein said latch securing means further includes a hook mounted on said sliding shaft, said hook including a groove, and a tab mounted on said rear main body, wherein when said sliding shaft is in said secure position and said groove is engaged with said tab.

CLAIM 152 (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED): A snowboard binding mechanism as in claim 151, wherein said hook further includes a cord attaching means for securing a pull cord operable to disengage said groove from said tab.

CLAIM 153 (CURRENTLY AMENDED): A snowboard binding mechanism for securing a cleat adapted to be attached to a snowboard boot to a snowboard, comprising:

a front main body adapted to be affixed to the snowboard, said front main body including a cleat receiving opening;

a rear main body adapted to be affixed to the snowboard;

a latch pivotally mounted to said rear main body to pivot between an engaged position and a release position, said latch including a cleat receiving notch;

wherein said cleat receiving notch is dimensioned and positioned to be located beneath a sole of the boot when the boot is fastened to the binding mechanism;

a cleat having a front tab and a rear tab, wherein said front tab is adapted to engage said cleat receiving opening in said front main body and said rear tab is adapted to engage said cleat receiving notch in said latch;

a spring mounted on said rear main body, wherein said spring is arranged to bias said latch toward said engaged position when said latch is at said release and engaged positions;

said latch being pivotable to said release position allowing release of said rear tab held therein against the bias of said spring; and

wherein said latch pivots around an axle, wherein said axle does not move forwardly or rearwardly with respect to the snowboard when said rear main body is mounted to the snowboard and said latch pivots from said engaged position to said release position.

CLAIM 154 (CURRENTLY AMENDED): A snowboard binding mechanism for securing a cleat adapted to be attached to a snowboard boot to a snowboard, comprising:

a front main body adapted to be affixed to the snowboard, said front main body including a cleat receiving opening;

a rear main body adapted to be affixed to the snowboard;

a latch pivotally mounted to said rear main body to pivot between an engaged position and a release position, said latch including a cleat receiving notch;

a cleat having a front tab and a rear tab, wherein said front tab is adapted to engage said cleat receiving opening in said front main body and said rear tab is adapted to engage said cleat receiving notch in said latch;

a spring mounted on said rear main body, wherein said spring is arranged to bias said latch toward said engaged position;

said latch being pivotable to said release position allowing release of said rear tab held therein against the bias of said spring;

wherein said latch pivots around an axle, wherein said axle does not move forwardly or rearwardly when said latch pivots; and

A snowboard binding mechanism as in claim 153, wherein said cleat further includes a rear portion and a front portion, said front portion being lower than said rear portion relative to said binding mechanism, wherein said front tab extends from said front portion and said rear tab extends from said rear portion.

CLAIM 155 (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED): A snowboard binding mechanism for securing a cleat adapted to be attached to a snowboard boot to a snowboard, comprising:

a front main body adapted to be affixed to the snowboard, said front main body including a cleat receiving opening;

a rear main body adapted to be affixed to the snowboard;

a latch pivotally mounted to said rear main body to pivot between an engaged position and a release position, said latch including a cleat receiving notch;

a cleat having a front tab and a rear tab, wherein said front tab is adapted to engage said cleat receiving opening in said front main body and said rear tab is adapted to engage said cleat receiving notch in said latch;

a spring mounted on said rear main body, wherein said spring is arranged to bias said latch toward said engaged position when said latch is at said release and engaged positions;

said latch being pivotable to said release position allowing release of said rear tab held therein against the bias of said spring; and

wherein said latch pivots around an axle, wherein said axle does not move forwardly or rearwardly with respect to the snowboard when said rear main body is mounted to the snowboard and said latch pivots from said engaged position to said release position;

wherein said cleat further includes a rear portion and a front portion, said front portion being lower than said rear portion relative to said binding mechanism, wherein said front tab extends from said front portion and said rear tab extends from said rear portion; and

A snowboard binding mechanism as in claim 154, further comprising a boot including an outsole, said outsole including a bottom surface and a recess formed therein, wherein said cleat is affixed to said boot within said recess such that said cleat is farther from the snowboard than said bottom surface.

CLAIM 156 (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED): A snowboard binding mechanism as in claim 155, wherein said recess includes a front bevel on said outsole, said front bevel being arranged to engage said front main body as said boot is lowered onto said binding mechanism thereby guiding said front tab into engagement with said front main body.